



NEWS RELEASE

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FIXING OUR STREETS

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Peter Howell Neighborhood (Broadway – Speedway and Alvernon –Columbus)

Two weeks ago the County Administrator offered a series of ideas that were intended to address the serious problem of funding Road Reconstruction in the region. I applaud him for his proactive effort. It is now time for the Council, City Manager and City staff to follow suit.

On Monday, April 16th, we will begin filling potholes with the \$75K that the Ward 6 office saved last fiscal year and which we allocated to road repair within the ward. The work will start in the Peter Howell Neighborhood on the morning of April 16th. Given the magnitude of the problem, it is a drop in the bucket. But it is our drop and it is a clear statement that our streets must be addressed at every level.

I have been vocal in my promotion of some very specific ideas that relate to how we might fund Road Reconstruction within the City limits. Those ideas include:

At the City level –

1. Refinance our Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF) debt - that will yield \$11M this year.
2. Develop a plan based on input from Council, City Manager, and Staff to allocate additional money to fixing our streets.
3. Discuss issuing a City Bond that would go before voters, the proceeds from which would be earmarked for road reconstruction and repairs.

At the RTA level - ask the voters if they would agree to either:

1. Re-allocate 20% of the existing RTA sales tax to Road Reconstruction - \$208M over 20 years, or
2. Ask the voters if they would agree to an increase of 1/4 cent to the existing RTA sales tax - \$32M annually (I credit Mr. Huckelberry for suggesting this as a possible alternate to my 20% proposal)

At the County level – Remember that every citizen of the City of Tucson is a Pima County resident as well. The County Administrator has proposed five options for finding \$23M this year for Road Reconstruction in the County. His proposal included "2%-3%" of that be allocated to the City. The City provides 41% of the County tax base. I propose increasing that 2%-3% offer to a more equitable level; 41% would yield over \$9M to the City this year. That represents the true percentage of the taxes paid by the City residents and is what should be spent to their benefit.



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At the State level - Immediately refund all of our HURF allocation. We receive just under \$40M annually. Just a few years ago that amount was just under \$50M. The State may not be the entire problem, but our Southern Arizona Legislative Delegation can certainly shoulder a portion of the responsibility if they have not been advocating for our full HURF allocation on an annual basis. They were elected to represent OUR citizens and we want OUR roads fixed.

I will be forwarding this memorandum to the City Manager as a starting point. I am requesting a list of funding options that our City Staff put together and present to Mayor and Council prior to the end of our budget discussions. For my part I will make sure that we look at every possible way to fix our roads and continue to move my ideas forward and encourage everyone else to do the same. I have also noted that Road Reconstruction may be the defining issue in this year's election. To that end, I thank those members of the County Board of Supervisors, both Supervisor Elias and Supervisor Valadez, who have reached across party lines and joined in this discussion. I look forward to the City Managers response to this request.

Thanks to the City Staff for helping us to find and fill Ward 6 potholes and thanks to the neighbors who have encouraged us and helped pick their favorite potholes. Together we can make this happen.



(Stop and say “thanks” to our city workers when you see them out doing this work in your neighborhood.)

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